

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
Security Information

THE "TRUST"

The History of a Soviet Provocation Operation

By R. WRAGA

(Translation of an article which appeared in Vozrozhdenie, volume 7, January-February, 1950.)

(The old Russian emigration remembers the scandal created by the belated uncovering of the so-called "Trust," an organization especially created by GPU for the purpose of demoralization of the emigration, especially its monarchist faction. Every one remembers the trip to Russia, in 1927, of the well known political leader, V. V. Shulgin, who visited Moscow, Leningrad, and Odessa, and upon his return published a book, Three Capitals, which created a sensation. This sensational trip, made, so to speak, under the nose of the omniscient GPU, was organized, as it was later found out, by the "Trust", and even the book of Shulgin itself was edited by the GPU operatives in Moscow. The author of this article is a former head of the Russian desk of the Polish intelligence service and, in the course of his intelligence activities, had the opportunity to become thoroughly acquainted with the activities of the "Trust.")

ALEXANDR ALEXANDROVITCH YAKUSHEV

In the latter part of 1921, there arrived in the capital of Estonia, Tallin, at that time still retaining its Russian name, Revel, an employee of the Soviet Foreign Trade Commissariat, Alexandr Alexandrovitch Yakushev, on his way to Norway. He was a man of about fifty, well-bred, and gentlemanly. A small goatee gave him that air of a pre-Revolution Tsarist official which is so dear to the hearts of Russian monarchists. Yakushev had been, formerly, an official in the Ministry of Transport. He had the reputation of an excellent and efficient administrator. When Trotsky added the functions of the Commissar of Transport to his other military and civilian functions, he ordered that Yakushev be found, and made him accept the post of the Director of the Department of Waterways, despite the fact that Yakushev did not hide his opposition, and even animosity, to the aims of the Bolshevik Revolution. In his new job Yakushev performed for the Bolsheviks valuable service. He considered himself as serving Russia and not Communism. This was during the war with Poland, and thousands of Yakushev's, military and civilians, were offering their services to Trotsky as the Commander in Chief. Even Brusilov, the hero of the First World War, was issuing proclamations to Tsarist officers, calling on them to rally

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
Security Information

-2-

under Lenin's banners in defense of eternal Russia.

After a period of time, Yakushev was transferred from the Commissariat of Transport to the Commissariat of Foreign Trade. His new position provided him with an opportunity to go abroad. In Rerval, Yakushev wanted to attend to an affair of a personal nature, and a typically emigre one. There resided in Rerval the husband of a lady who herself remained in Russia. For a long time Yakushev was very close to the lady and wanted to marry her. A divorce was necessary. Both Yakushev and his lady-friend were not only good monarchists, but also good Orthodox Russians, and recognized neither the Soviet divorces, nor the Soviet "ZAGS" marriages. The husband did not protest. The two men developed a liking for each other, since during the lengthy conversation it was discovered that both of them were faithful monarchists.

Yakushev went on his way, and his new friend sent a long letter, through regular mail, to an emigre monarchist leader in Berlin. In this letter he included in detail the aspects of his conversations with Yakushev touching upon Soviet political and economic matters. In order to protect Yakushev, he did not mention the latter's name, but did not stop to think that should the letter fall into the Soviet hands, the detection of the informant's name would not present the slightest difficulty because of the subject-matter touched upon in the letter.

When Yakushev returned to Moscow, he was immediately arrested. On the desk of the Commissar who interrogated him lay the photostat of the above letter. Yakushev was being interrogated by one Kiakowski, an assistant of the Chief of the Counter-Intelligence Section of the Cheka. His real name was Victor Stechowicz. Formerly, he belonged to Revolutionary groups of Polish youth and, at one time, was a member of a clandestine military organization which collaborated with the Polish General Staff. Arrested by the Bolsheviks, his case aroused the interest of Dzerzhinski himself. Dzerzhinski was a man of great charm. Stechowicz soon became one of the most important members of the Cheka. It was not the only case of such a success on the part of Dzerzhinski. During the same period, the Bolsheviks apprehended another officer of the Polish Intelligence, also a former member of socialist-revolutionary organizations, a Lieutenant Ignace Dobrzynski, who was assigned a mission in the Soviet interior together with his fiancée, M. Navroska. Both of them had the reputation of being uncompromisingly anti-Bolshevik, and their work in the

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
Security Information

-3-

Polish military organizations was heroic, in the full sense of the word. However, Dzerzhinski started working on the cases also, with the result that Dobrzynski, under the alias of Sosnowski, too became a trusted member of the Cheka.

When we, at the time, were analyzing these cases of treason committed by people highly esteemed from the standpoint of the Polish revolutionary and national movement, worthy, as it seemed, of the highest trust, an idea occurred to us--had not Dzerzhinski used the assertions made to them, that he himself remained an enemy of Russia, and had not he tried to convince them that in the service of Cheka it would be possible best of all to wreak a bloody vengeance on the Russians for all that Russia perpetrated in regard to Poland?

Immediately after the Polish-Soviet war, Steckiewicz-Kiakowski served, under the alias of Kossinski, in the Soviet Legations in Helsingfors and in Riga, where he was the representative of Soviet Intelligence. In this job he became well-oriented as to the situation in the Baltic countries. He was especially well-versed in the personalities and the organizational aspects of the local Russian emigration. In any case, he knew that which probably was not known to Yakushev, to wit: there were active monarchist organizations in existence in the territories of Latvia, Estonia, and Finland, which were carrying out an intensive work for the monarchist center in Berlin and for the intelligence service of General Wrangel.

Kiakowski told Yakushev that the Cheka considered him to be an agent of an emigre organization to which he transmitted the information dealing with the economic situation within the Soviet Union. The proof lay in the letter, a copy of which was before Kiakowski.

Yakushev gave the full story, that is, he told Kiakowski on what personal matters he went to Reval. As a result, the fiancée of Yakushev was also arrested. She proved to be more clever than Yakushev himself and suggested how the Cheka could check the truth of their statements. With this purpose, she suggested, she would write to her former husband, and the letter then might be delivered by a Cheka man. This man could check on the spot the fact that Yakushev is not, and had not been a member of any emigre organization.

## STECKEWICZ-KIAKOWSKI'S MISSION

Kiakowski accepted her letter, and took upon himself the mission of

Security Information

-4-

delivering it. Yakushev's fiancée was released, but Yakushev himself was sentenced to death without waiting for the investigation of his case to be completed. The Tribunal concluded that, despite all the circumstances, Yakushev in fact revealed the Soviet state secrets. (There exists a factor which makes it doubtful whether Yakushev was acting in good faith on his original trip to Rerval. At the time Yakushev was an employee of "Lesoeport." This organization was closely connected to Dzerzhinski's pet throughout the years of Soviet rule.)

Stackewicz-Klakowski, this time for variety's sake using the alias of Kolesnikov, proceeded to Rerval, with the letter of Yakushev's fiancée. In Rerval, he presented himself to the addressee as a member of a clandestine anti-Soviet officers' organization. He quickly established the fact that Yakushev was telling the truth. Just as quickly, he gained the confidence not only of the careless conspirator, but of the co-members of his organization. They accepted him as a hero. They, living in the atmosphere of well-being of rich and serene Baltic capitals, had a feeling of inferiority before the accomplishments of the real heroes who, in the dreadful conditions of Soviet existence, were waging the fight for the "restoration of the Tsar's rule." Such a hero they saw in Kolesnikov, a former officer of the Polish Intelligence and now a Cheka man and a favorite of Dzerzhinski.

Kolesnikov established numerous contacts, promised to send in information, gave some important instructions as to the method of conducting the anti-Soviet activity abroad, and returned to Moscow where Yakushev nightly waited for the execution of the death sentence. In the cell with him there was one Edward Opperspath. His story, as related by himself to Yakushev, was not only full of adventures but a tragedy. His real name was Upenins. He was a son of a Latvian peasant. He was graduated with a gold medal from a commerce high school and, in 1915, from an officers' school. During the war he was, at first, at the German front, and then at the Caucasian front. During the Revolution he was a member of a Soldiers' Soviet and was arrested by the Bolsheviks. After a period of time he was released and worked, first, in the field of pre-conscription training and, then, in the Headquarters of the Home Defense Command. After being assigned to the operations against anti-Soviet guerrillas, and violently hating the Bolsheviks, he established contact with counter-revolutionary organizations in Byelorussia and soon became, without terminating his official service for the Bolsheviks, one of the leaders of the local anti-Soviet organizations. On their behalf,

CONFIDENTIAL

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
Security Information

-5-

he crossed the Soviet-Polish frontier a number of times, and went to Warsaw to establish the contact with Boris Savinkov. The latter, after leaving Russia, founded on the Polish territory, an anti-Bolshevik organization which was attempting to penetrate Russia and bring about a popular uprising there. In collaboration with Savinkov, and on his instructions, Opperspath organized on Byelorussian territory the "People's Union for Defense of the Country and the Liberty," but, when this organization reached its highest point of development, he was arrested in Minsk, was tortured, and forced to divulge all he knew. Under pressure from the Cheka he wrote a pamphlet the purpose of which was to discredit Savinkov. This pamphlet was published in Berlin, in 1922. Opperspath did not conceal from Yakushev the fact that he considered himself deeply at fault. He gave the impression of a man completely broken and one who renounced all further struggle with the Bolsheviks. The stories of Opperspath were full of the details of tortures suffered by him. He would talk by the hour about the omnipotence and omniscience of the Cheka.

HOW OPPEPSPATH DECEIVED BORIS SAVINKOV

It must be acknowledged that Opperspath told Yakushev almost the whole truth. He held back only the fact that he was arrested by the Bolsheviks in 1917, started working for them then, and immediately was assigned to the Cheka. At that time the Bolsheviks valued the Latvians very much as a sort of "condottieri" of the Revolution. The Latvian regiments were either returning to their homelands by breaking through the German lines, or else, giving vent to their hatred of the Russians, went into the Soviet service as punitive units destroying the counter-revolution, the bourgeois, and in general, anything that came their way.

As a Cheka man, Opperspath performed valuable service for the Bolsheviks. In Riga, as well as in St. Petersburg, his name was held in horror by the counter-revolution, but about all of this Opperspath, of course, did not tell Yakushev. He also did not tell that he actually established the contact with anti-Bolshevik organizations and with guerrilla units, in his capacity as a Bolshevik provocateur. He was also a provocateur in his relationship with Savinkov.

A strange man was Boris Savinkov! Much was written about him. One of the more interesting descriptions came from the pen of Winston Churchill. But no one explored that double-mindedness of his, which

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~



-6-

was the cause of the condition where--together with a brilliant mind and a rare political and literary talent, a gift for organization and a boundless energy--there was in him so much of incomprehensible credulity, irresponsibility, and almost childish romanticism. However, such personalities are often met with in the fields requiring anonymity, such as intelligence, terrorism, sabotage, and, to some degree, diplomacy. Such personalities may impress by their experience, professional knowledge, but how often it is that, at the most critical moments, people of this type make incomprehensible mistakes and show inexplicable irresponsibility. Such a mistake in Savinkov's past was his boundless faith in Asef. When Russian revolutionists were investigating Asef, Savinkov (already one of the better-known leaders of the Russian socialist-revolutionary movement) was pompously proclaiming: "I would rather believe my brother to be a provocateur than Asef, the most crystal-pure of all the people I know."

Despite the warnings of the Polish Counter-Intelligence, Oppenruth gained full confidence of Savinkov. He was given access to the most important organizational secrets, and received from Savinkov the mission of organization and direction of the work in the Soviet territory. As a result, the organization established in Russia by Savinkov and Oppenruth, "People's Union for the Defense of the Country and the Freedom," was in actuality, from start to finish, organized, directed, and at proper times liquidated, by the Chelov. After that Oppenruth was removed from Savinkov and given another assignment: he was charged with the organization of a similar provocation directed against the monarchists. It was in the role of such a provocateur that Oppenruth found himself in the same cell with Yakushev.

Later on, Oppenruth took part in the working out of a plan for inducing Savinkov to cross into Russia. In 1924, Savinkov, succumbing to the persuasiveness of some of his supporters, secretly crossed the frontier in their company. Upon the crossing he was arrested. His companions had long since been Soviet agents. The Savinkov case was given wide publicity by the Bolsheviks. True to his romanticism, Savinkov prepared an effectual plan in the spirit of a Wallonrohde: he repented, confessed to everything, and expressed the desire to collaborate with the Bolsheviks. But it was much harder to deceive the Bolsheviks than it was to deceive Savinkov. Moscow does not believe in tears and repentance. After almost two years of imprisonment, Savinkov succeeded in committing suicide: he jumped out of a sixth-story window of the GPU building.

CONFIDENTIAL

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
Security Information

-7-

MONARCHIST ALLIANCE OF RUSSIA

Let us return to Yakushev. When, after a lengthy stay in the cell with Opperspath, he was called before Steckewicz, he was a changed man. Steckewicz broached the subject at the start. No matter what color—white or red—Russia remains Russia, said Steckewicz. One might have a different attitude in regard to the Bolsheviks, one might wage the internal fight against them, but one can not seek assistance in this fight from outside the country, from foreign nations, which are only waiting for the opportunity to plunder Russia. And one must not fight against the Bolsheviks in alliance with the Russian emigration which servilely caters to the forces inimical to Russia.

This Yakushev understood best of all. Specifically, the representatives of this emigration, their carelessness and talkativeness, brought about his having had to wait from hour to hour, for several months, the execution of the death sentence. The hatred of Yakushev toward the emigration knew no bounds. I have frequently had reason to believe that the psychology of treason is less complicated than it appears. Personal feelings, frustrated vanity, and hatred at times break through with such force that they form a wall between the person and the world, and completely obstruct the ability to think logically and to plan ahead.

Yakushev agreed to everything. Steckewicz laid before him a concrete plan. On Russian territory there would be created a monarchist organization ("Monarchist Alliance of Russia," or abbreviated in Russian, MCR). This organization would be headed by chief assistant to the Chief of Counter-Intelligence, V. A. Styrne, especially assigned to this task, V. S. Steckewicz-Kiakowski (who, which is typical, was the head of the Anglo-Saxon Section of the Cheka counter-intelligence), the Chief of Military Censorship Section—A. A. Langovoy, I. Dobzhinski-Sosnowski, Opperspath, who, in addition to his other aliases added one more, Kossatkin, former District Attorney Doroshinski, and others. As a front man the organization would have a Chairman, a Tsarist General A. M. Zajonezkowski, well-known to the emigres. He was forced to accept this role under the threat of execution of his beloved daughter. However, this "Chairman" did not play any part in the further development of the affair. The actual management was taken over by the Deputy Chairman of the GPU, himself, Artusev, who, if I remember right, was an Italian. His real

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

## Security Information

-3-

name was Ricci.<sup>1</sup>

The task of this organization, as Steckewicz told Yakushev, should consist of the counter-action to activities of the emigres inimical to the interests of Russia, and in the resistance to the aggressive intentions of foreign powers directed at Russia. Yakushev evidently has not been told that no less important was the drawing out of internal counter-revolutionary elements by the lure of monarchist slogans, and their uncovering. Yakushev, the only actual monarchist in this thoroughly Chekist setting, began drawing up a political program. In this respect he was given carte blanche: it would not matter what he wrote as long as the results would appeal to the monarchist emigres and would convince them that this new organization, which made its appearance on Russian territory, was a serious one.

<sup>1</sup>For the first time in Wraga's article, the name of General A. M. Zajonczkowski appears in connection with the "Trust." His undoubted connection with the GPU, mentioned by Wraga, was fully confirmed in 1927. Zajonczkowski, who was given the alias of Verkhovsky during his connection with the "Trust," not only lived through the liquidation of the Monarchist Alliance of Russia, but continued to live quietly in Moscow and teach in the Soviet military schools until his natural death. After his death, the Bolsheviks provided his widow with a generous pension. In his article, Wraga, for the first time, in so far as we know, calls the "Trust" in print by its actual name, the Monarchist Alliance of Russia. He is mistaken, however, in assuming that the birth of the "Trust" was fully and exclusively due to the machinations of the GPU. In reality it was a very complex combination of two opposing and warring forces. The attempt of A. P. Kutepov to penetrate Russia, and to induce in it a revolutionary "detonation" through terroristic activity--to the efficacy of which, as a weapon independent of the existing political or sociological conditions, he attached a great importance--had as much bearing on the creation of the "Trust" as the desire of the Bolsheviks to prevent such a penetration. The founding of the "Trust" coincided with the beginning of the NEP. Numerous trusts were being created in the Soviet industry and commerce. In creating a code for clandestine communications, the members of the organization, about which Wraga writes, utilized the word "Trust" for the designation of the organization itself, exactly in the same manner as they used commercial terminology for other designations in this activity.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~



~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
Security Information

-9-

Yakushev was released from prison. He was charged with probably the most important mission in the whole business. He was instructed to go abroad and to establish personal contact with rightist Russian organizations, penetrate their topmost echelons, and, especially, the high military circles and their leadership. In all his statements he was to bring out one leading theme: Russia is beginning to awaken after the horrible revolutionary experience, in her are beginning to be resurrected powerful anti-Bolshevik forces which, not having the technical means to bring about a forcible overthrow of the regime, are gradually gaining the control of the whole of the Bolshevik system from below. The contemporary Bolshevikism—Yakushev was to say—does not resemble the dangerous communism, as it was several years ago. It had already undergone the basic process of evolution. Not only Communism, but a socialism as well, has lost face in Russia. The Russia being resurrected is the former, eternal Russia. A factor in this resurrection is, in part, the organization represented by Yakushev. It would be a catastrophe for Russian interests if the emigration were not to understand this new re-birth of the country. It would be a terrible mistake for the emigration to bring about an intervention by foreign powers in Russian affairs. This would only cause the Russian people, who hate the interventionists, to unite around the Bolsheviks. The emigration must forego the direct activity within Russia. Yakushev's organization would supply it with all the necessary information, would fulfill all the intelligence missions. The emigration, on its part, should limit itself to giving to the great powers the information couched in just such terms which would protect Russia from a premature revolution or a foreign aggression. First of all, the emigration must forego any terrorist activity within Russia.

Personally coached by Artusov, Yakushev went on his first trip through Europe at the end of 1922.

YAKUSHEV'S VISIT TO GRAND DUKE NICHOLAS

Everything that took place subsequently, today seems unthinkable. Without any difficulties Yakushev established the contact with the monarchist leaders of the emigration, and gained their confidence to such a degree that on his second or third trip he was received personally by Grand Duke Nicholas himself.

Generals A. I. Denikin and P. N. Wrangel were more cautious. The latter refused to see Yakushev although his closest military ad-

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

-10-

visors referred to him as a hero of the anti-Bolshevik struggle. At the same time, however, he did not take a definite stand on the matter. The succeeding developments showed that Yakushev had protectors of exceptional caliber, both in civilian and military circles. One of them was, by the way, the long-time Chief of Staff to General Wrangel, General Monkewitz, in charge of operations against Russia. At the end of 1926, General Monkewitz disappeared without a trace, and only later it was determined that, during all of his stay in the emigration (since 1920), he had been a Soviet agent. According to the information we had, Monkewitz was in Moscow, in 1932, in the employ of the GPU, and, as rumor had it, was one of the organizers of the kidnapping of General Wrangel's successor, General Kutepov (who considered him a personal friend and had full confidence in him). Another proponent of liaison with the MOR was General Klimovitch, former head of Russian Department of Police, and, at the same time, head of Wrangel's counter-intelligence. He became a great partisan of Yakushev and widely publicized the orthodoxy of his monarchist feelings and convictions. The case of Klimovitch is a classic example of how erroneous, at times, may be the professional counter-intelligence evaluation if the objective approach is discarded and the evaluation is made exclusively on the basis of "intuition" and of personal confidence. Klimovitch had, apparently, extensive experience in these matters, and yet he made the same mistake as regards Yakushev, that the experienced revolutionary, Savinkov, made in regard to Oppenruth.<sup>2</sup>

#### THE CAUTION OF WRANGEL AND DENIKIN

Within a short period of time, the MOR gained complete control of the right wing of the Russian emigration. Yakushev, who for con-

2

For some reason, there is no reference in Wraga's article to another general who, together with Yakushev, was misleading the Russian emigration. Former Russian Military Attache in Montenegro, General N. M. Potapov, whose "Trust" alias was Medvedev, accompanied Yakushev abroad on a number of occasions, was received with him by Grand Duke Nicholas at Choigny, and, like Zajonczkowski, was living on the fruits of his Cheka activities even after the liquidation of the "Trust." As late as 1938, he was serving in the Red Army either as an instructor or a military historian.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
Security Information

-11-

spiratorial reasons assumed the name of Federov, established the contact not only with the monarchist groupings, but also with some organizations of other political colorations. Under his influence the tone of the monarchist and the rightist press changed. It began to warn against over-energetic activities, against calling on the foreign nations to go to war against the Soviets. It began affirming that deeper and deeper processes of evolution were taking place on the Soviet territory, that a resurrection of Russia was at hand.

The task set before Yakushev was not limited only to the establishment of contacts between MOR and the emigre organizations. It went much farther. Yakushev established direct contact with the intelligence services of different countries and concluded with them a number of characteristic two-sided agreements. Yakushev visited Rostov, Riga, Helsinki, Warsaw, Berlin, and Paris. The heads of various services conducted serious negotiations with him on the basis of the recommendations of the civilian and military leaders of the Russian emigres. Who should know better, they thought, whether or not Yakushev deserves confidence, than Generals Wrangel, his deputy Kutepov, Monkewitz, and Klimovitch. But, for reasons unknown, Wrangel was unwilling to talk about his suspicions and reservations, and both Kutepov and Klimovitch believed in MOR, in general, and in Yakushev, in particular. The heads of intelligence services thought that great possibilities existed. Yakushev succeeded in presenting the MOR picture as that of a wide-spread network, the members of which sat in all the Soviet agencies, not excepting the Army and the GPU. Yakushev mentioned a name of a Soviet general, one Denisov, who, supposedly, was working for the MOR. Only later it was found out that this Denisov was actually the above-mentioned Chief of Military Censorship, Langovoy, whom we have already discussed. Yakushev did not limit himself to promises. He generously delivered from his brief case various reports, maps, and even original documents, dealing with economic and military matters in Russia. In return for the obligation to supply information to the services, Yakushev only asked that they facilitate communication between the emigre organizations and MOR in Russia. He asked for assistance in moving the MOR men beyond the confines of Russia. This was considered a minor matter, and within a short time the diplomatic couriers of cooperating states began to carry MOR mail in their pouches to and from Moscow. On the Soviet frontier there were dozens of MOR men. Some intelligence services each had special officers, assigned to the sole task of maintaining contact with MOR men in Russia, attached to their various consulates and legations in Moscow.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
Security Information

-12-

Nothing is more dangerous for an intelligence service than such a situation, when, suddenly, it is unexpectedly confronted with the great and easy possibilities of obtaining information. In such cases, the service directs all its facilities and energies toward the exploitation of these possibilities. It begins to disregard other means and ceases to be creative. And that is what happened in this case. The connection with the MOR proved to be so fruitful, and at the same time so inexpensive, in terms of human and material expenditure, that it completely monopolized all the activity of these services. Why run new chains, why engage in dangerous clandestine activities, why use up large sums of money, when almost weekly there arrived from Moscow diplomatic pouches with prettily sealed envelopes containing the answers to almost all their questions and giving over greater promise of continuing the widening and deepening of intelligence activity in all directions?

Yakushev, as it happened, was not only a good monarchist and an excellent organizer, but also a top-notch diplomat. He appointed his personal representatives to different intelligence services. These representatives, with the dignity of real envoys, represented the interests of the MVD, completely independent of the local emigre groups. The diplomatic maneuvers of Yakushev had a definite aim. This aim consisted of uncovering the methods of communication and collaboration between different services. On the other hand, these maneuvers constantly and systematically created intrigues and misunderstandings, the purpose of which was the weakening of such collaboration. Up to this time cooperating with each other, the heads of friendly intelligence services now adopted the attitude of jealous suitors competing for money of the same heiress.

#### THE CONFERENCE OF THE EURASIANS AT MOSCOW

When, at the end of 1922, the Cheka built up the MOR, neither Stepanovitch-Kliakowski, nor Artuzov, nor even Dzerzhinski himself, probably dreamt that their provocation would develop into such a far-flung operation; that from a single contact between Yakushev's fiancée and her single-minded husband there would be developed such a huge organization which would encompass not only a great part of the Russian emigration, but also most of the European General Staffs and intelligence services. After a short period of time it became necessary to compartmentalize the whole operation carefully into separate projects, so-called "legends." In 1927, there were about fifty such "legends."

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
Security Information

-13-

With the growth of the "Trust," the appetite of the GPU grew also. By now it was not satisfied with merely paralyzing the activity of the Russian emigration and the foreign intelligence services. Work of a more profound character aiming at long range objectives now began.

One of the "legends," aimed at such a long-range objective, was the exploitation by the Cheka of the "Eurasians." This organization appeared in the Russian emigration at the beginning of 1922. It was headed by Russian professor and scientists: Prince Troubetzkoy, Alexoyev, Savitsky, and others. Outwardly, the aims of the organization were strictly academic. It based itself on a speculative theory, namely, that Russia, as a state, is neither Europe nor Asia, but a continent in itself--Eurasia. The Eurasians definitely favored the historic Russian imperialism and, starting from supposedly idealistic and anti-Marxian theses, involuntarily fell prey to the theory of historical materialism and were bound, as a matter of course, to arrive at the acceptance of the Bolshevikism, in their research, as an unavoidable stage in the development of Eurasia.

Such pseudo-scientific concepts wholly coincided with the aims of the Soviet policy. It was important for the Soviets to have such concepts develop in international scientific and political circles, which would recognize the unity of the Russian state and would counteract all attempts of foreign intervention in Russian affairs. The leaders of the "Trust" were ordered to make contacts with the Eurasian movement. Several couriers were sent to Europe who were to tell the emigre Eurasians that their theories were not isolated, that in Soviet Russia the Eurasian movement had many partisans. In the "Trust," this work was given to Denisov-Langovoy. To strengthen the Eurasians, a clandestine conference of Eurasian leaders was organized near Moscow, in the summer of 1926. To this conference was invited Professor Savitsky, representing the emigre Eurasians. I don't know if another such academic conference ever took place, for only one actual academician was present, Savitsky. All the other members were agents of GPU, well-trained for the occasion by Denisov-Langovoy. Langovoy was a polite person; soon he returned the courtesy by honoring the Eurasian conference at Prague with his presence.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> To the story of Wraga as to the connection between the GPU and the Soviet diplomatic corps and the merging of these two Soviet agencies into a single espionage-diversionist instrument, one may add the fol-



~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
Security Information

-14-

SIDNEY REILLY AND ADO BIRK

The other cases which created considerable agitation in their time were also connected with the "Trust": the cases of Captain Reilly and of Ado Birk. The Reilly case was written about extensively, and, for the most part, inaccurately, and in a fantastic vein. I shall not go into details as regards this tragic story, but only limit myself to delineating the main facts. Captain Reilly was one of the bravest and the most outstanding officers of the British Intelligence. He was considered a specialist on Russian affairs and performed valuable services for his country. In 1925, the representatives of the "Trust" lured him into the territory of the Soviet Union. He was promised that he would be shown the working of the organization in Russia itself. Several months after his crossing the Soviet-Finnish frontier, the Bolsheviks issued a statement to the effect that Soviet frontier guards shot several individuals among whom one was identified as a Captain of the British Service, Reilly. Actually what happened was entirely different. Reilly arrived without a mishap in Leningrad, and then in Moscow, and was arrested there a few days later. I still have not been able to visualize fully all the details of the case, and I don't know if the British Intelligence was able to reconstruct it, either.

According to the information I had at one time, the "Trust" planned at first to let him come back, but during the border crossing, and as a result of the conversations with the members of the "Trust," there arose in Reilly's mind definite suspicion that the whole organization, from top to bottom, was shot through with Soviet provocation. He was not able to hide his suspicions. Naturally, under such circumstances, he was to be destroyed, since the GPU under no conditions could allow the return of a witness (and such a witness!) of its provocation back to Europe. For several years Reilly was imprisoned in Lubianka, where he supposedly finally went mad.

The Ado Birk case was more complex. He was the Estonian envoy to Moscow. Through "Trust," the GPU attempted to recruit him as an

leaving detail not appearing in the article of the Polish author: the Chekist mentioned by him, A. A. Langovoy, alias Denisov in charge of the Eurasia "legend" in the "Trust," was, after the liquidation of the "Trust," a member of the Soviet delegation at the Geneva Disarmament Conference.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
Security Information

-15-

agent. This whole affair is full of so many hard-to-believe details that a whole book could be written on the subject. This case is complicated by the fact that in the Estonian legation there was at that time another Birk, Roman, who was the liaison man between the Estonian Intelligence and the "Trust" organization. In this case, the already existing collaboration between the GPU and the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs becomes characteristically evident. The deputy to Chicherin, Litvinov, earnestly worked as a provocateur. Roman Birk was worked upon and inspired by the GPU, and Ado Birk by the employees of the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs. However, it would be difficult to give an answer to the question as to where the Commissariat of the Foreign Affairs ends and the GPU begins. During that time, the Chief of the Polish and Baltic Sections in the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs was one Loganowski who, in 1923, while a Secretary of the Soviet legation in Warsaw, organized the blowing-up of the ammunition dump at the Warsaw Citadel. Loganowski was a close friend of Steckiewicz and of Sosnowski.

GROMYKO, BOGOMOLOV, ZARUBIN, MALIK-FORMER CHEKISTS

When we speak about the connection between Soviet diplomatic and intelligence services, we should remember that in Soviet Russia these two services are not differentiated as to their functions. Each Soviet installation operating abroad, regardless of which government agency they are a part, must carry out espionage functions, provocation and diversionist activities, in the same manner as these same functions must be performed by all the Communist Parties in all countries, and all Party members everywhere in the world, if they don't want to be accused of Trotskyism or "espionage for capitalist imperialism." In the first few years following the Revolution some diplomats—Chicherin, Krassin, Rakovsky, and others—attempted at least to limit espionage targets and missions given to diplomats and the employees of the Foreign Office. Chicherin had a dread of the GPU, and in so far as he could, fought against the penetration of his central office and his legations by the Chekists.

But, already, Maxim Litvinov, "performed valuable service" by his compliance as regards those tasks and obligations with which his agency was saddled by the GPU. With the passage of time, these tasks grew more and more. And, finally, the principle was adapted that to be a "real," exemplary, Stalinist diplomat, one had to be a Chekist, a Bolshevik, who not only went through theoretical training in various "general" and "higher intelligence" schools, but also had practical GPU experience. The first organizer of the

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
Security Information  
-16-

Foreign Division of the GPU was Davtian, later a Soviet "diplomat" in the Near East and the first Soviet envoy in Warsaw, who was liquidated in the Yeshov purge of 1937 (the role of the "liquidator" was played by a beautiful opera singer, Maksakova, planted with him as his wife). During the years of the first "five-year-plans" there were still in the Soviet diplomatic service two groups of diplomats and diplomatic personnel: the authentic career personnel, and those detailed from the GPU. However, from 1939 on, in order to become a major diplomatic officer, one had to have behind him an espionage-diversionist record, and a good record at that. All the well-known diplomatic figures--Gromyko, Bogomolov, Zarubin, Gusev, Malik--at one time worked in the GPU and were doing espionage work.

However, at that time, the methods used for recruiting Ado Birk in the GPU network seemed to be fantastic beyond belief. Not only his chiefs and subordinates were set against him, but he was even beaten and physically terrorized, and all that while he was still a formally accredited envoy. As a result of this pressure, the GPU succeeded in having Ado Birk sign several letters to the editor, in the Soviet press, composed by the GPU and the Foreign Office, which attempted to discredit his own government and accused the Estonian government of establishing anti-Soviet liaisons with other European countries, and in particular with Poland. Apparently the GPU committed a number of mistakes in the Birk case. Because of this, it is difficult to comprehend what its final aims were in this case. It may be assumed that Birk was to play a major part as an informer discrediting the aims of the Baltic countries and of the nations friendly to them. After some time Birk managed to evade his guard and to escape into the Finnish Mission compound, in Moscow, and finally to make his way into Estonia, where he was put on trial. This case was not only somber, but also somewhat delicate since, of course, a woman was involved. The Estonian Tribunal acquitted him.

The Birk case caused great agitation in world public opinion. It understood that the Soviet policy is not built on the foundation of international law or the accepted rules of ethics and morals. This it understood and, of course, did not arrive at any conclusions.

The case of Captain Reilly and the case of Ado Birk started a great influence, as we shall see, on subsequent history of the "Trust."

#### SHELGIN'S VOYAGE TO RUSSIA

In 1926, there took place one of the most effective "Trust" actions.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
Security Information

-17-

Its leaders invited one of the most noted emigre monarchist leaders, V. V. Shulgin, to Russia. Shulgin, who for many years edited the Kievlianin, enjoyed the reputation of being an unquestioned authority in the fields of monarchist ideology and politics. An enthusiastic supporter of Stolypin measures, he gladly accepted the invitation and, at the end of 1926, crossed the Estonian-Soviet frontier and arrived in Kiev. Shulgin spent several weeks in Russia. In addition to Kiev, he visited Moscow, Leningrad, and several provincial cities. His trip, throughout, was managed by the members of the "Trust," and, everywhere, he had long conversations with the leaders of the "Trust." He was given almost complete freedom of movement and of observation of Soviet life. As a result, he was blinded by the strength and the possibilities of the "Trust," and promised its leaders that he would bear witness to the fact that the suspicions that the "Trust" was a provocation attempt, were not only baseless, but also highly damaging from the standpoint of Russian interests. The leaders of the "Trust" attached such great importance to Shulgin's testimony that they asked him to write and publish a book dealing with Russian reality, and the role played in it by the organization of Russian patriots. Even Shulgin himself was astonished. How could he write such a book and thus compromise and endanger the organization? However, his "Trust" friends quieted him down, saying that the organization had reached such a stage of development, and was so powerful, that nothing could damage it anymore. So now Shulgin, upon his return to Europe, began to write an anti-Soviet book written under Soviet dictation. It is probably the only one of its kind. The book was called Three Capitals and was published in Berlin, in 1927. The cautious Shulgin, fearing, despite the assurances he had received, to compromise the organization by his disclosures, sent the draft of the book to Moscow, to the leaders of the "Trust," for their approval. Only later he found out that the draft was proof-read by the Deputy Chief of GPU, Artusov, himself. No doubt, this work amused Artusov greatly.

#### THE "TRUST" ACQUIRES A GREAT INFLUENCE

Four years elapsed from the time of the birth of the "Trust" to the time Shulgin's book was published. During this period, the "Trust" not only became a powerful organization which attracted to itself all the orthodox monarchist and anti-Bolshevik elements, but also obtained control over most of the Russian emigration. It not only achieved penetration into the principal anti-Soviet intelligence services, acquired influence over the information about Soviet

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
Security Information

-18-

Russia going to a number of European capitals, but it, itself, became capable of conducting deep reconnaissance in Europe and of committing sabotage in the realm of international relations. One could pose the obvious question: were there no suspicions aroused during this period lasting several years? Hadn't anyone noticed the ease with which the MCR moved its men across the frontiers and with which it collected and disseminated information? Did it not seem suspicious that this organization, so much talked about in all European capitals and all the emigre cabarets, had not been uncovered by the Bolsheviks?

It must be admitted that there were suspicions. With the passage of time, the suspicions occurred more and more often. These suspicions arose in the minds of some of the Russian emigres, but no one was willing or able to formulate them openly or loudly, and, when the attempts to do so were made, they were immediately drowned by the shouts of the enthusiasts about the "sacrifices of the workers in the Russian underground movement." The MCR ideology was wholly acceptable to most Russian emigres. It was the accepted thought that Bolshevism would perish of its own accord, that Russia remains Russia, that it would be possible to regain the country without much effort. In the end man will believe that which he wishes to believe. In addition, there was one aspect which strengthened this belief. For certain monarchists, Russia has always been a state which was ruled by an insignificant minority—a state in which the people were subjected to an unrestricted political control. The whole question, therefore, came down to a personalities problem: who was to be the ruler. This was even discussed by some of the leading monarchists publicly who stated that the Soviet regime is quite acceptable and that it only lacks a Tsar at the head. This, by the way, was even stated by the pretender to the Russian throne, Grand Duke Cyril, himself, who wrote, in 1927, that the Soviet Constitution "is not bad at all." It is only necessary to change the leadership. Shulgin, who travelled over Russia for several weeks, did not notice much difference between Tsarist and Soviet Russia. "Everything is as before, only worse," stated Shulgin with satisfaction. Could the MCR theses fail, in such an atmosphere, to find fruitful soil in the emigration, and could the Soviet provocation effort fail to find among the emigres fervent partisans, ready to swear under oath that they were dealing with a manifestation of true Russian nationalism?

The "Trust" affair proves that, essentially, no emigration is capable of checking itself, that it cannot protect itself from provoca-



~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
Security Information

-19-

tion and from agents, that esige evaluations in security matters cannot be considered objective and realistic estimate of the situation as on the wish to believe in that which coincides with their aims and political programs.

Much greater responsibility for not uncovering the "Trust" as a Bolshevik provocation lies on the intelligence services of these countries which established contact with the "Trust." In this case, however, the Moscow provocation was aided by that hunger for information and that pursuit after easily obtainable results, which are essentially characteristic of those services which limit themselves to gathering great quantities of information without seeing, or even being interested in seeing, the complete picture, resulting from the obtained information. In that period, the services of the countries bordering on Russia--Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Poland, and Rumania--were new services, beginners lacking experience. Despite this fact, they were, in the eyes of other, bigger, services, the experts in Russian matters, because of either their geographical position or the superficial knowledge of Russian life which was possessed by some officers in those services.

But even in the atmosphere of easy intelligence gains, these intelligence services should have, with the passage of time, come face to face with circumstances which could not fail to arouse suspicions. First, suspicions evidently arose in the minds of the officers of the British Intelligence. The case of Captain Reilly tended to strengthen the suspicions of the British Intelligence. As to Polish Intelligence, very serious suspicions arose there as early as the beginning of 1925. There were three sources of these suspicions. The most serious suspicions arose from the study of other intelligence material, made in a special bureau charged with this task. This material was very voluminous, and came from completely reliable sources. This material did not confirm the evaluations and the information supplied by the MOR. From it, it did not at all follow that the Bolsheviks were in a process of evolution, that the Communist Party was losing ground to nationalist elements, that Soviet Russia was losing the ability to expand politically and militarily. The second source of suspicion was our Frontier Intelligence Section. Colonel St. M., later the head of Polish Intelligence, and at that time serving on the frontier, repeatedly reported that the activities and the type of information supplied by the MOR people were causes for suspicion. Finally, the third source was our representative in Reval, Captain T. D., who on his own initiative, began reading the MOR mail passing through his hands. He was astonished

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
Security Information

-20-

by the glaring contradictions, and the lack of security consciousness, on the part of the MOR organization in Russia, in matters bearing on the security of the organization itself. The representatives of Polish Intelligence called General Kutepov's attention to their doubts, but the indignation of the brave General at such suggestions knew no bounds. He was completely confident in the trustworthiness of the MOR itself, and of its agents in Europe. It is interesting to note that soon after our warnings, the rumors began to spread among the emigres to the effect that there were Soviet agents in the Polish Intelligence, who were trying to sabotage the work of Russian monarchists, in Russia and abroad.

In 1926, Marshal Pilsudski became Polish War Minister. After familiarizing himself with the work of our intelligence as regards Russia, he pointed out the fact that intelligence was relying too much on its connection with the MOR, and was giving him information, on which he was to base his decisions, without making sufficient efforts to confirm it through other sources. Pilsudski ordered the Chief of Intelligence to demand categorically from the MOR that they deliver the Soviet mobilization plans.

At this time, Yakushev, whom our representative contacted on this matter, was in Paris. Yakushev, always appearing willing to undertake any assignment, this time evinced visible dissatisfaction. He stated that the MOR did not have people in the Mobilization Section of the Soviet General Staff just then, that he would have to bribe outsiders, and even set in advance the sum he would need at \$10,000, at that time a considerable sum of money. The Chief of Intelligence instructed our man to guarantee the payment of this sum. Several months later, the MOR sent in the requested report with supporting documents. The material was submitted to Marshal Pilsudski, who returned it some time later with the notation: "Counterfeit." Our analysis bureau, only several weeks later, discovered on what grounds Pilsudski based his conclusion. The plan showed that, in case of war, the Bolsheviks would concentrate their main forces on their left, southern, flank of the front, and gave in support, to convince us of the validity of this document, false information on the railroad capacity. On Yakushev's next visit, he was told of the evaluation given to the plan. He was non-plussed, while his explanations appeared even more suspicious. So, in 1926, there were a number of factors affecting the "Trust" affair, which were unsatisfactory from the Bolshevik standpoint. Under the circumstances, the GPU evidently could not rely upon the possibility of continuing this provocation indefinitely.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
Security Information

-21-

THE TERRORIST "TRIADS" OF GENERAL KUTEPOV

In April, 1927, Opperspath appeared in Helsingfors, after crossing the Soviet-Finnish frontier illegally. With him came Maria Zakharchenko-Schultz who worked for several years in the MOR and enjoyed the reputation of being one of the most courageous members of this organization.<sup>4</sup>

Zakharchenko-Schultz belonged to that category of idealistic counter-revolutionaries which the MOR sought to attract in order to control their activities. Opperspath told the Finnish Intelligence officers and the representatives of local Russian emigres the following story: the MOR as an organization was not without blemish. The organization had been created by the GPU and was placed under his control in order to counteract the activity of the emigres, to divert the work of foreign intelligence services, and to feed them false information. All the leaders of the MOR, including himself, Opperspath, and Yakushev, were agents of the GPU, blindly following the instructions given them from above. About himself Opperspath told what he already told Yakushev, in Lubyanka. He only added that he could not continue to play this tragic and disgusting role any longer, and had, therefore, decided to warn Maria Zakharchenko-Schultz and some other idealistic monarchists of the real character of the "Trust," and now he had come abroad in order to give warning to the leaders of the Russian emigres.

In addition, said Opperspath, the success of the Soviet provocation was aided in a large degree by Soviet agents who were working clandestinely in several intelligence services, particularly in the Polish Service. Opperspath hinted that the Chief of the Polish General Staff, himself, was a Soviet agent. At the same time Opperspath stated that the greatest success achieved by the "Trust," from the Soviet point of view, was the fact that for several years the Russian emigration refrained from using terrorist tactics on Russian territory. For this reason, Opperspath was insisting upon the necessity of organizing the terrorist activity with redoubled effort, and offered his help, abroad as well as in Russia.

<sup>4</sup>The name Zakharchenko-Schultz was a combination of M. V. Radkevitch's (Z-S) maiden name, with the pseudonym under which she and her husband, G. N. Radkevitch, at one time lived in Helsingfors.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
Security Information

-22-

At that time, my predecessor in the post of head of the Russian Section of the Polish Intelligence, Major M. T., was in Helsingfors. He warned the Polish Intelligence against Opperspath, calling him a dangerous Soviet provocateur. In his opinion, Opperspath continued his game as before. General Kutepov was called to Helsingfors, from Paris. He was of different opinion. Zakharchenko-Schultz was thoroughly impressed with Opperspath's courage and convinced the General that he should give Opperspath the opportunity to rehabilitate himself in full through participation in terrorist activity in Russia. Opperspath stayed in Finland for several months, and continued, during this time, to maintain lively correspondence with the press. However, the irresponsibility of the leaders of the Russian emigre organizations and of the Finnish Intelligence was such that he was never thoroughly interrogated on the subject of the "Trust." He told only that which he wanted to tell, and his tales smacked more of adventure stories than of a factual testimony of a participant in one of the biggest provocations in the history of intelligence. Opperspath was not only allowed to take part in the planning of the terrorist activities, but even was given direction of them. In the summer of 1927, three "triads" were sent to Russia, to commit acts of terrorism in Moscow and Leningrad. They were to use explosives for this purpose. At the head of one of these "triads" was Opperspath himself. One triad (Larionov, Monomakhov, and Soloviev), sent to Leningrad, threw three bombs in the Central Communist Club, on 6 June 1927. This triad performed the assigned task successfully, because it deviated from the instructions given it by Opperspath. Another group consisting of Opperspath, Zakharchenko-Schultz, and Voskressensky (Peter), made the attempt, on 3 July, to blow up a GPU employees' dormitory in Moscow. The participants in this action perished during their flight in the Byelorussian region. Among those killed, according to the official special section communique, which was signed by Menzhinski, was Opperspath, on whose body was found an operational diary with information on a proposed operation against the Lubianka. This caused a Warsaw (emigre ?) paper, Za Swobodu, to pose the question of provocation. In the following year these terrorist actions were repeated: Radkevitch, Zakharchenko's husband, with a friend, threw a bomb in the Lubianka Headquarters. Radkevitch was killed in the explosion, and his friend was captured and killed near Moscow; the members of other groups, intercepted by Chekists in the North, weren't able to carry through their plans at all. Some were killed on the spot (Soloviev, Sharon), while others were shot after the trial (the case of "monarchists" Balmassov, Solsky, and others). The operations organized by Opperspath justified the wide publicity given by the Bolsheviks to the danger to the Soviet Regime

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
Security Information

-23-

from the terrorist acts of the Russian emigres and the internal opposition.

THE END OF THE "TRUST"

Opperputh's sortie into Russia formally terminates the "Trust" Affair. From that time on, the traces of Yakushev, and of Opperputh, himself, are lost. As to the latter, several years later, there appeared agent reports to the effect that the GPU had dispatched him to the Far East, where he worked among the local Russian emigres. Artuzov, Styne, Steckewicz, Sosnowski, and Langovoy were awarded the Order of the Red Banner. Steckewicz and Dobrzinski-Sosnowski continued among the leaders of the GPU, holding General's rank, until their liquidation in the purge conducted by Yezhov.

This, however, was only the formal aspect of the liquidation of the "Trust." In actuality, the affair lasted longer. During these years, the GPU penetrated deeply into the Russian emigre organizations, and especially those of military character. It was in the "Trust" that the idea of kidnapping emigre military leaders, such as Generals Kutepov and Miller, was conceived and successfully planned.<sup>5</sup>

The damage inflicted by the "Trust" on the Russian emigration is incalculable. It can be stated without exaggeration that the political and military capabilities of the emigration were undercut to such an extent that, from 1927 on, its role became insignificant. No lesser damage, inflicted by the "Trust," was sustained by the intelligence services of the European powers interested in Russia, since, for several years they were severed from their own potential real sources, were being fed notional and deception material, and were demoralized as a result of the apparent easiness of the work. The "Trust" was the cause of numerous misunderstandings between various services, which destroyed that mutual confidence which, at first, united them in their work against the Soviets. This is why I always considered and still consider the "Trust" affair

<sup>5</sup> According to information received by the editors from a reliable source, Opperputh continued to operate as a Soviet agent until 1943, when he was uncovered by the Germans and shot in Berlin.



~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
Security Information

-26-

the most interesting and educational for everyone who is interested in the intelligence operations against Russia. I also think that, unfortunately, the post-World War II period abounds in circumstances described above, on the basis of which the Bolsheviks could, without much difficulty, create an organization as dangerous, as full of provocation as the "Trust"—the Trust No. 1!

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~